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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/569,559	02/27/2006	Joseph W. Stolle	2003UR033	5349
Brent R. Knight ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company P.O. Box 2189 Houston, TX 77252-2189			EXAMINER HEWITT, JAMES M	
			ART UNIT 3679	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 07/23/2010	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/569,559

Applicant(s)

STOLLE ET AL.

Examiner

JAMES M. HEWITT

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 May 2010.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2 and 4-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-25 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2 and 4-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 May 2010 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB-08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

The amendment filed 5/20/10 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. 35 U.S.C. 132(a) states that no amendment shall introduce new matter into the disclosure of the invention. The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows:

Regarding the amendment made to paragraph [0026] of the specification, initially it should be noted that the language of the presented paragraph corresponds to paragraph [0025] as originally filed. In the added language, reciting that the internal straight thread is *preferably* a single continuous thread constitutes new matter not supported by the original disclosure as it impliedly allows for straight threads that are not a single continuous thread as shown. The last sentence of the added language, "A straight thread is a thread such as commonly used with bolts or other load-bearing threaded connections, as opposed to a thread that is tapered to provide a seal such as commonly used in threaded pipe connections." constitutes new matter. The only support provided by the original disclosure is that as shown in the drawing, which shows and defines an internal straight thread. Such added language to qualify the straight thread or define the straight thread is considered new matter.

Applicant is required to cancel the new matter in the reply to this Office Action.

The amendment filed 4/6/09 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. 35 U.S.C. 132(a) states that no amendment shall introduce new matter into the disclosure of the invention. The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows:

Regarding the amendment made to paragraph [0027] of the specification, initially it should be noted that the language of the presented paragraph corresponds to paragraph [0026] as originally filed. Replacing "In an alternative embodiment" with "In *some* implementations" constitutes new matter, as does replacing "In this embodiment" with "In *some* embodiments".

Applicant is required to cancel the new matter in the reply to this Office Action.

Election/Restrictions

Claims 17-25 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to because: as replacement sheets were filed for Figures 1-4, it is presumed that changes were made thereto, yet no description of the changes has been provided as is required; in FIG. 5B: '27b' is not referring to the threaded end of '27'; shouldn't the male threads of the spacer be shown as engaged with the female threads of the second component?; '28' should be '29'. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office

action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference character(s) not mentioned in the description: 26a, 26b. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d), or amendment to the specification to add the reference character(s) in the description in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(b) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New

Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 8, part "C." does not accurately characterize the invention and is not in accord with the disclosure's description of the claimed embodiment. It seems at least as if instances of "first component connection end" should be "second component connection end" and vice versa.

The first component is referenced by numeral 10 in FIG. 5A. The second component is referenced by numeral 20. Though from claim 8, it seems that the claimed first component is referred to by numeral 20 in FIG. 5A and the second is referred to by numeral 10. Part "C" was amended to recite that the first connection end abuts the top end of the spacer. This now conflicts with "B. (iii)", which recites that the second component connection end abuts the top end of the spacer.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 6-7, 9-10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hughes (US 5,950,744).

Hughes discloses a pipe joint for self aligning a drill string, tubing string or casing string of the type comprising a plurality of drill pipe, tubing or casing sections arranged in end to end relation from a location above the ground to a lower location adjacent a tool connected to a bottom end of the string and wherein the adjacent ends of the sections are connected to each other to form a plurality of spaced joints extending downwardly from the ground to the tool, the improvement wherein each joint comprises an upper section having at least one downwardly projecting extension and a lower section having a corresponding recess for receiving the extension and wherein the extension and the recess can fit together in only one way.

Hughes employs pins, legs and keys (spacers/nipples) that mate corresponding recesses and slots (openings/nipple recipients) in order to align and join the sections in one way. The connection collar (18) includes internal straight threads, as shown in the figures.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 11-12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hughes (US 5,950,744).

As to claim 11, Hughes fails to teach that both of the components are notched. Yet it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to notch both of Hughes' components since Applicant has attributed no absolute criticality to notching both components and states "Additionally first component 10 and second component 20 can be fabricated such that there is essentially no external diameter upset (i.e., there is substantially constant external diameter across the connection)."

As to claim 12, Hughes fails to teach that the components are covered with a suitable coating to protect from galling or corrosion. Examiner takes official notice of the provision of coatings on oil country tubular goods, and accordingly it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to provide a suitable coating on Hughes' components in order to protect the components from galling or corrosion.

As to claim 15, Hughes fails to teach a first seal configured to be disposed between the first component and the connection collar; and a second seal configured to be disposed between the second component and the connection collar, wherein the first seal and second seal isolate the first set of threads and the second set of threads from

a region external to connection collar. Examiner takes official notice of the use of seals between threaded components in order to isolate the threads. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Hughes to provide a first seal configured to be disposed between the first component and the connection collar; and a second seal configured to be disposed between the second component and the connection collar in order to isolate the first set of threads and the second set of threads from a region external to connection collar.

Claims 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hughes (US 5,950,744) in view of Hughes (US 2005/0023831 A1).

Hughes '744 fails to teach a plurality of openings in the first component and a plurality of openings in the second component, wherein the first plurality of openings and the second plurality of openings align to form one or more passages through the first component and the second component. Hughes '831 teaches a similar drill pipe joint that employs openings in a first component and a plurality of openings in the second component for wire or other material for transmitting power and data between the joined sections, wherein the first plurality of openings and the second plurality of openings align to form one or more passages through the first component and the second component. Refer to FIGS. 22-28 and [00710-[0072]. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Hughes '733 with a plurality of openings in the first component and a plurality of openings in the second component for wire or other material, wherein the first plurality of openings and the

second plurality of openings align to form one or more passages through the first component and the second component as taught by Hughes '831 in order to transmit power and data between the joined sections.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 5/20/10 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues "Hughes '744 fails to teach or suggest a separate set of threads on each of the first and second components, and also fails to teach or suggest use of synchronous timing between such separate threads." Examiner disagrees. Hughes' primary concern is alignment of the joined pipes so as to permit a collar to be threaded onto the joint. Hughes speaks to the precision required to effect this alignment so as to readily permit threading of the collar thereon. The collar is comprised of a single, continuous straight female thread. It thus follows that the joint forms a single, continuous straight male thread in order to be effected. As such, the joined pipes form a 'synchronous' thread.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES M. HEWITT whose telephone number is (571)272-7084. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/James M Hewitt/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679